

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAMA KO 00237 171657Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /011 W
-----032009 171821Z /46 R

P R 171552Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BAMA KO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8336
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMA KO 0237

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV US XA
SUBJECT: NEW POLICY INITIATIVES IN AFRICA

REF: (A) 77 STATE 311031, (B) ABIDJAN 0404 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES DRAFT PAPER "NEW POLICY INITIATIVES IN AFRICA" SETS A MUCH NEEDED FOCUS ON PARTICULARIZING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH AFRICAN STATES, THUS HEIGHTENING THE QUALITY OF DIALOGUE WITH THEM. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT. WHILE IN AGREEMENT WITH THE GENERAL THRUST OF THE PAPER, WE SUGGEST FOLLOWING ALTERATIONS:

2. DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES.

A. FIRST PARAGRAPH THIS SECTION, "INSTRUCT AMBASSADORS AT SELECTED POSTS TO UNDERTAKE A DIALOGUE WITH CHIEFS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT" ETC., IS POORLY CONSTRUED. ONE SHOULD ASSUME THAT AMBASSADORS HAVE CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH CHIEFS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT. EMBASSY SHOULD RATHER BE INSTRUCTED TO INCLUDE IN ITS DIALOGUE WITH CHIEF OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT FACT THAT WE ARE SEEKING TO DEEPEN
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TIES AND THAT WE WANT THEIR PERCEPTIONS REGARDING COMMON AREAS OF INTEREST WHERE COLLABORATION COULD BE STRENGTHENED.

B. SECOND PARAGRAPH SHOULD BE BROADENED TO INCLUDE OCCASIONAL EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN PRESIDENT AND AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE ON MATTERS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATE, WORLD ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, PEACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, ETC. AN ADDITIONAL

PARAGRAPH SHOULD FOLLOW SUGGESTING AN INCREASED NUMBER OF VISITS BY SELECTED AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE TO THE UNITED STATES. AFRICANS ARE ACUTELY AWARE OF PROTOCOL AND OFTEN QUICK TO TAKE OFFENSE AT ALLEGED OR PERCEIVES CONDESCENSION. ACCORDINGLY, WE URGE THAT WE SCRUPULOUSLY CATER T SENSITIVITIES BY HAVING COMMUNICATIONS TO HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT FORMALLY ONLY FROM THE PRESIDENT, TO MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ONLY FROM THE SECRETARY, AND SO FORTH. WITH THAT IMPORTANT CAVEAT, WE HEARTILY CONCUR THAT THERE IS NO QUICKER WAY TO CONVINCE AFRICAN LEADERS THAT WE TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY THAN TO SEND A PRESIDENT-TO-PRESIDENT LETTER OR ARRANGE A STATE VISIT.

3. CONSULTATION WITH EUROPEAN ALLIES.

A. EMBASSY SUGGESTS INCLUDING CONSULTATIONS WITH JAPAN SHOULD IT WISH TO BE INVOLVED IN DIALOGUE ABOUT AFRICAN POLICY.

B. THE IDEA OF ARRANGING MULTILATERAL WESTERN AID TO WEST AFRICAN NON-AGRESSION PACT SECRETARIAT IS GOOD BUT DEFICIENT IN TWO AREAS. FIRST, WE DOUBT THAT THE FRENCH WOULD BUY THE IDEA. THE PACT OFFERS FRANCE ITS BEST OPPORTUNITY IN YEARS TO REASSERT ITS POLITICO-MILITARY INFLUENCE IN WEST AFRICA THROUGH THE PROVISION OF MILITARY EXPERTISE AND SALE OF MATERIEL; WE THINK FRANCE WILL WANT TO GO IT ALONE ON THIS ONE. SECOND, THE PACT IS TOO AMORPHOUS AND TOO AMBIGUOUSLY VIEWED BY MEMBER STATES FOR THE KING OF TRAINING ENVISIONED TO EFFECT POSITIVELY THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE

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UNITED STATES. SOME MEMBER STATES, MALI INCLUDED, WOULD FEAR ANY PROGRAM THAT HAVE THE PACT EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAL SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE AND SUBSTANTIVE AUTOMONY.

4. ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES. WHILE ECONOMIC ISSUES MAY HAVE TAKEN BACK SEAT AT JUNE AND JULY 1977 MEETINGS CITED IN BACKGROUND PORTION OF DRAFT PAPER, DEPARTMENT IS AT LEAST AS AWARE AS WE THAT NIEO, RESOURCE TRANSFERS, COMMODITY POLICIES, INVESTMENT ISSUES, TERMS OF TRADE, ETC., ARE MATTERS OF CRITICAL CONCERN TO AFRICANS. INsofar AS THE USG CAN BE FORTHCOMING ON ANY OF THESE ISSUES AND CAN DEVOTE SOME RESOURCES TO MEETING AFRICAN ASPIRATIONS, OUR INFLUENCE SHOULD INCREASE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BAMAKO00237
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780025-0040
Format: TEL
From: BAMAKO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780157/aaaabvwx.tel
Line Count: 107
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c5d7cfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 77 STATE 311031, 78 ABIDJAN 404
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3765597
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW POLICY INITIATIVES IN AFRICA
TAGS: PGOV, US, XA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c5d7cfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014